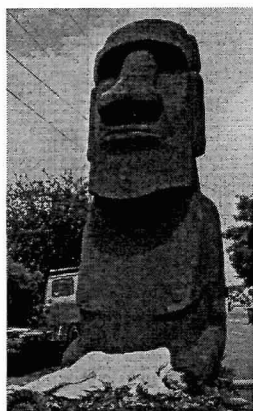


Moai Sightings

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY in Washington D.C. held a dedication ceremony on 7 June to welcome a 9 foot tall *moai* that was carved by Easter Island artisans for an exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Because of their global orientation and large international student enrolment, American University is proud to become the home of the *moai*. The dedication ceremony and reception took place at the display site, between Hughes and McDowell Halls on the campus. His Excellency Andres Bianchi, Ambassador of Chile, dedicated the statue.

WASHINGTON STATE HAS A HANDSOME *moai* created by Carl Magnusson of Langley. Adorning his front yard, the statue has become a local landmark. It is 12 feet high and constructed of a layer of modified concrete over a styro-foam base, and weighs around 600 pounds. It was in a local Fourth of July parade in 1997 (see photo). In the parade, the statue was pulled by friends of Magnusson, who were dressed in native costume and moved it along on a base of round poles. Magnusson plans to move to a new place with a large orchard, with room for a sculpture garden. So Langley may soon be seeing a *moai* population boom.



SOME ODD *MOAI* WERE SEEN at the Hotel Tropicana in Benidorm, Spain, by François Dederen and his wife Ivette. Two statues flank the entry; another (really ugly) is in the hotel hall (Photos by F. Dederen).



What's New in Polynesia

Fiji

AMERICANS IN FIJI ARE URGED to leave as soon as possible, according to the State Department. Australia and New Zealand issued similar warnings to their citizens, and tourism at most of the islands' resorts dropped sharply. Estimated losses to the tourism industry were close to \$500,000 day in mid-July. Rebel

groups seized four tourist resorts on Turtle, Laucala Island, the Buca Bay resort on Vanua Levu, and the Rukuruku resort on Ovalau. The Canadian couple who managed the Laucala Island resort were beaten and held for 24 hours.

Telegram Tribune (San Luis Obispo) for 23 July, 2000

IT APPEARS THAT REBEL ACTIVITY is not the only problem for Fiji. A 'hot spot' of weather over those islands has resulted in an unprecedented coral bleaching 'event'. This has affected many pristine reefs and appears to be the most destructive ever recorded for Fiji's coral reefs.

Bulletin of the University of the South Pacific (Vol. 33(14)

Tonga

KING TAUFU'AHAU TUPOU IV appointed his son, Prince Lavaka Ata 'Ulukalala, as the new prime minister. A change was expected, but most assumed the king would give the position to his eldest son, Crown Prince Tupouto'a. The prince, however, has been critical of the current government. Tonga's new prime minister is a staunch conservative and opposed to the pro-democratic movement in Tonga.

Tok Blong Pasifik, Vol. 53(4)

The Pacific

THE *WORLD DISCOVERER* CRUISE SHIP hit an uncharted reef in the Solomon Islands and has been declared a total loss, with damage is too severe to be repaired. She was scheduled to be towed out and sunk in deep water. The ship, one of the two original ships specifically built for expedition cruising (the other being the *Explorer*) had sailed from Fiji and was headed to the Trobriands, New Guinea and Yap. At three-thirty in the afternoon, as the ship was cruising through Sand Fly Strait in the Solomon Islands, she passed over a submerged reef. A great rumbling sound from under the keel was heard; then there was absolute silence as the ship went over into deeper water. Edmundo Edwards, long-time resident of Rapa Nui, was on board as lecturer, and he reported the following details.

"I knew we had hit a reef but as the ship is supposed to have a double hull, I did not worry too much and thought we had only slight damage. But just a few minutes later the ship started to list to starboard. We ran up on deck to find out what had happened. By the time we made it to the lounge, water had already covered some sections of level C—including our cabin—now underwater, along with all my equipment and books. As the trip had started on Easter Island, I had carried on board everything I might need for my lectures plus my brand-new computer, a printer, scanner, semiprofessional digital video camcorders and digital video cameras, editing software, etc. Approximately US \$25,000 of my equipment was under water.

"As soon as we made it on deck we were asked follow procedures for abandoning ship. A few minutes later we found ourselves floating around in lifeboat Number 3, dressed only in T shirts and shorts. At that point everyone was inundated by a heavy tropical storm. Each time we could see the ship through the sheets of rain, it was listing more and more and, at one point, I thought that it would capsize in front of us and sink.

Once the rain passed we went toward shore where we landed on a sandy beach surrounded by large *tamanu* trees. One of the locals told us this was the fourth ship to go aground at that same place in the last year or so, including two Korean fishing vessels and a container ship from Japan.

"Later we were told that our rescue vessel would pick us up at 8 p.m. and at 3:30 a.m. we reached our hotels. The next day we flew to Sydney, and then to Auckland, Tahiti and Easter Island. We were happy to be safely back, but the loss hurts. I do not know how I will continue working without this material.

"I think that I must have some karma going on with the ocean. This trip started badly. When we arrived to the island of Ducie, our first stop, I landed with the exploring party on the first Zodiac and we overturned in the surf. I was wearing an inflated vest and was trapped under the Zodiac and nearly drowned. In this accident I lost my expensive video equipment.

"As I began this trip in Easter Island and I was returning there later with the ship, I bought along a large metal trunk with all the books I might need plus all my new equipment. Sadly I hear there likely will be little if any compensation as insurance covers the ship and loss of life, but not personal equipment. At the end, of course, we were happy to be alive, although things will be very difficult in the following months. The books are without doubt my greatest loss because many are out of print and some had been given to me by the authors and thus were signed by them."

Edmundo enclosed a list in the chance that some readers might have spare copies and would be willing to part with such precious objects. He added that, "I will offer everyone who sends or brings a book a one-day free tour, or an invitation to dinner—or both if necessary. I know that means a lot of dinners, but that also means a lot of good times." Anyone wishing to contact Edmundo may do so by email: eeastman@entelchile.net or by mail, Edmundo Edwards, Correo Hangaroa, Isla de Pascua, Chile (See end of this item for Edmundo's "wish list").

A follow-up on the ship's fate was received in July. She had been patched together and floated—a long process as the ship had been in water up to the bridge on the starboard side. A salvage crew was just beginning the process of going through the rooms, trying to recover what items they could for those passengers who left the ship without their belongings. Suddenly a boatload of rebels from the Solomon Islands bore down on the *Discoverer*. They demanded custody of the ship but were rebuffed (it likely was a slow day in the rebellion). They subsequently returned, armed to the teeth. This caused the salvagers to retreat to their tug boat. At last view, the *Discoverer* was swarming with rebels, busily looting her of everything movable. No official has seen the ship since and it is unknown if she is afloat, sunk, or what.

Edmundo commented that there is a "certain poetry to being looted by pirates. It's more memorable than being cut up with a torch to be recast as Toyota fenders. But then, it's a terrible waste..." and he fears for birds and nearby reefs if the fuel tanks rupture.

Edmundo's lost books include the Bernice P. Bishop Bulletins: Peter H. Buck, *Mangarevan Society*, N°122; *Ethnology of Mangareva*, N°157; *Samoan Material Culture*, N° 75; E. G.

Burrows, *Ethnology of Futuna*. N°138; *Ethnology of Uvea* (Wallis Island), N° 145; K. P. Emory, *Stone Remains in the Society Islands*, N° 11; *Kapingamarangi. Social and religious life on a Polynesian Atoll*; N°228; E. S. C. Handy, *The Native Culture in the Marquesas*, N° 9' *Polynesian Religion*, N° 34; *Marquesan Legends*, 69; *History and Culture in the Society Islands*, N° 79; T. Henry, *Ancient Tahiti*, N° 48; E. W. Gifford, *Tongan Myths and Tales*, N° 8' A. M. Hocart, *The Lau Islands, Fiji*. N° 62; E. M. Loeb, *History and Traditions of Niue*, N° 32; R. Linton, *Archaeology of the Marquesas Islands*, N° 29; W. C. McKern, *Archaeology of Tonga*, N° 60; J. F. Stimson, *Tuamotuan legends*, N° 148; *Tuamotuan Religion*, N° 103; L. Thompson, *The Culture History of the Lau group; Fiji; An Ethnography*, 162.

Other books lost are Malinowsky's *The Sexual Life of Savages*, T. Monberg, *The Religion of Bellona Island*. Copenhagen, 1966; J. Vansina, *Oral Traditions as History*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1985; *Oral Tradition: A study in Historical Methodology*, 1965; H. E. Maude, *Of Islands and Men: Studies in Pacific History*. Oxford University Press, 1968; P. F. Quiros, *The Voyages of Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, 1595-1616*. 2 vol. Hakluyt Society Series 2, Nos.14, 15. London: Hakluyt Society 1904; P. Bellwood, *Man's Conquest of the Pacific*, Oxford University Press, 1978; P. V. Kirch, *The Evolution of the Polynesian Chiefdoms*. Cambridge University Press; J. W. Leach, and E. Leach, (eds) *The Kula: New Perspectives in Massim Exchange*. Cambridge University Press. 1983; J. Smith, *Tapu removal in Maori Religion*, Journal Polynesian Soc. Memoir N° 40; R. Firth, *Rank and Religion on Tikopia*, London, Allen and Urwin 1970; and *Tikopia Ritual and Belief*. London Allen and Urwin 1967.

What's New in Hangaroa

THE ITEM IN OUR LAST ISSUE (Vol. 14(2):50) about the Island's craftspeople who display their works in the local *mercado* and who complain that the tour guides do not bring in their tourists to buy from them brought a heated reply from some island guides. To begin, no tour includes the *mercado* or the *feria*. Should a guide take tourists there, it is his own decision and on his own time, and of course, to satisfy the tourists' wishes to buy souvenirs. Some guides have had unfortunate reactions from those who are selling items not made on the island, such as onyx *moai* from mainland Chile, but who try to pass them off as "local" products. When a tourist asks a guide if it is from the island, and is told the truth, the *artesanos* become outraged. Some guides will bring their tourists to the building, but wait outside to avoid confrontations with those selling various curios.

Recently the tour guide association invited the president of the *artesanos* to meet with them to discuss the problem. The guides would like the *artesanos* to describe the carvings and curios to the tourists, telling them something about the island's artistic heritage, and to not blame the guides when there are few tourists on the island.

A NEW AIRPORT BUILDING is in the planning stages. First item on the list is the control tower. Chilean architects came to the island

to present their ideas. One of the most controversial designs for the airport tower resembles a giant *moai* with *pukao*, approximately twenty meters high. [We are not making this up. Hey, if Las Vegas can have a hotel shaped like a pyramid....] Mayor Edmunds announced this choice on local TV. Not all islanders think a *moai*-shaped tower is OK. One can only pray this tacky idea will be a reject. Will the eyes flash red lights?

THE GREAT DOG ROUNDUP took place on the island this winter. Hanga Roa was saturated with dogs and for about a week Rapa Nui cowboys (who were paid for each dog they brought in) began capturing them at every curanto, morning market, and general human get-together (which the dogs would also frequent). One eager guy tried to take a dog from its own backyard. It was said that they would be killed by injection. In former years, poisoned meat would be thrown out every so often, and then a crew would go around and collect the dead dogs. It would be nice if dog owners had the option of spaying or altering the dogs as a better means of animal control. [While the spaying female dogs is done on the Chilean mainland, we were bemused to hear that Chilean vets do not neuter male animals. Machismo is alive and well in Chile.]

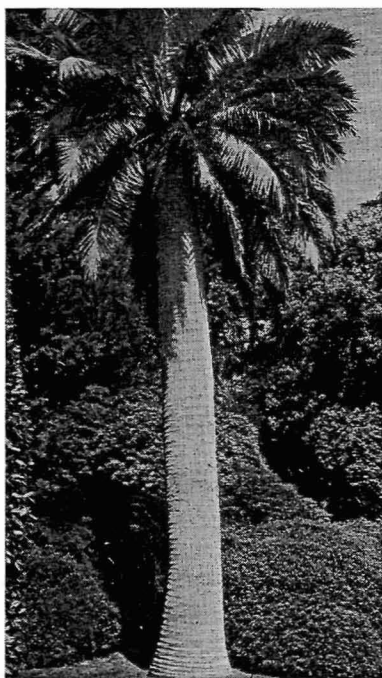
THE NEW SCHOOL HAS BEEN APPROVED and looks exiting. It will be constructed at the site of the old leper sanatorium. There will be around 500 to 600 pupils. The first classrooms should be ready by March 2001 and the rest should be ready the following year. There will be areas for laboratories, workshops, etc. The idea is to have a school where the elders of the island can teach the children about the old knowledge, as well as to have visiting scholars from other countries, making it a center of education and learning.

CONAF HAS BEEN BUSY with a tree planting project in the crater at Rano Raraku, as well as at the park ranger's picnic area. Among others, some coconut trees were donated by the municipality of Hanga Roa. However, some nice flame trees that were planted at the entrance to the site were cut down because someone (it is said a guide, but no one takes responsibility) complained that the trees interfered with the view, although a few steps in either direction provided a clear view.

SEA CREATURES. A whale was spotted at Hanga Roa Bay, a rare sighting at Easter Island. Jacques Mayol (the "dolphin man") visited Rapa Nui at the invitation of the Orca Diving Center. He was interested in the petroglyphs that display dolphins and whales, and is talking of doing a documentary about diving in the island's offshore waters. A Marine sanctuary was created last year at Punta Roa, between Apina and Hanga Piko. The sanctuary is to protect species of fish as well as provide a secu-

rity zone for the Naval facilities in that area. In 1976, the islets of Motu Nui, Motu Iti and Motu Kao Kao were declared natural sanctuaries.

<http://www.rapanui.co.cl>



CHILEAN WINE PALM SIGHTING! Our roving correspondent from the Netherlands, Herbert von Saher, was amazed to find a Chilean wine palm at the Villa Carlotta, Lake Como, Italy. The Villa, built at the end of the 18th century for a German princess, has a botanical garden surrounding it. In the garden he came across an enormous Chilean wine palm, so important to all Rapanuiphiles. The photograph shows the great girth of the trunk (much too big to fit into the holes at the top of Rano Raraku).

Reviews

Lost Gods of Easter Island

TV Review by Paul G. Bahn

On BBC television in the UK recently, we were presented with a documentary program with the above title, written and presented by Sir David Attenborough, which was a salutary lesson in how to make excellent and gripping television. It was well structured, well paced, and told a coherent story without recourse to endless talking heads and gimmicky reconstructions with actors. Apparently, Sir David was due to film on Easter Island as part of his next series on the natural world, so he presumably felt that this was a golden opportunity to make what is essentially the film of his paper to the Frankfurt Symposium (Attenborough 1990) concerning the probable origin and date of the strange, elongated human wooden statuette he bought at auction in New York about twenty years ago. Readers of the RNJ are referred to that well-argued and well-illustrated article for the basic story. Suffice it to say that Sir David makes a solid case for his statuette having been acquired on the island during Cook's visit, at the same time as the St Petersburg statuette, the only carving in the world that bears any resemblance to it. The film retraces all of his detective work, taking him from London's Museum of Mankind to the Kunstkammer in St Petersburg, the State Library in Sydney, and of course the island itself. The analysis of the statuette's wood at Kew, by Dr Paula Rudall, already reported in the 1990 article, is also recreated on camera—it proved to be *toromiro*. The film includes footage of the Kon-Tiki expedition and of Charlie Love's statue-moving experiment in Wyoming; in one amusing scene, we see Attenborough packing his suitcase, and placing a copy of Steve Fischer's edited volume, "*Easter Island Studies*" on the top, presumably because it's cover is photogenic and large enough for the camera to pick up its subject-matter easily. The program went a little farther than the article in its speculation about what the statuette represented. Since it is a goggle-eyed male figure, with elongated six-fingered hands, it is probably safe to assume that it was some kind of deity, and Sir David